

Washington, D.C. – Today, Representative David Price (NC-04) voted against H.R. 3409, calling the Republican legislation, which would roll back 40 years of progress toward cleaner air and water, "Déjà vu all over again, again." The bill combines four anti-environment bills already passed by House Republicans with another measure that blocks new standards for surface coal mining—including mountaintop removal in Appalachia. Rep. Price released the following statement.

"Today is the House's last day in session until the middle of November. Instead of voting on a jobs bill or extending tax cuts for middle class Americans, the Republican majority is bringing a bill to the floor to roll back 40 years of protections put in place to safeguard the air we breathe and the water we drink.

"But this is not just any anti-environment bill. The so-called 'Stop the War on Coal Act' combines five bills, 4 of which House Republicans have already passed. And it comes on the heels of more than 300 votes the House has already taken since January 2011 on bills that would block environmental regulations, weaken environmental laws, and stop environmental research. It's Déjà vu all over again, again. Is this really the most important bill House Republican could bring up before the eight-week recess they've called?

"Like the President, I 'strongly reject the notion that economic growth and protecting the health of our communities and families are mutually exclusive.' The argument that clean air and water somehow poses a hazard to the economy is as ridiculous now as it was in the 1970s, when the major polluters used this argument to try and stop enactment of our landmark environmental laws. Rolling back EPA's authority to limit pollution – whether from carbon, mercury or lead – won't create a single job.

"In fact, our clean air and water laws have a strong record of delivering cleaner air and improved health, while promoting economic growth. A recent rigorous and peer-reviewed study found that between 1990 and 2020, air quality improvements made through the Clean Air Act will save the U.S. \$2 trillion and prevent at least 230,000 deaths per year. Economists also estimate that the total benefits of the Clean Air Act amount to 30 times its costs. And the Clean Water Act has already led to immense progress nationwide on cleaning up our waters, restoring fish habitat, protecting drinking water sources, reducing wetland loss, and developing water-based recreational economies.

"Every day, our nation's landmark environmental laws prevent big polluters from causing more toxic air pollution and drinking water contamination that can harm our environment and lead to a variety of illnesses. This bill would protect corporate polluters rather than our families and communities. In short, this effort doesn't reflect our priorities, and it doesn't reflect our values. By that standard, and only that one, it is a fitting way for Republican to end this Congress' work until November."

Summary of H.R. 3409

- Reject climate science by repealing EPA's scientific finding that greenhouse gases endanger public health and the environment, marking the first time in history that Congress would approve legislation to overrule an objective scientific finding, and overrule the Supreme Court decision that said greenhouse gases are air pollutants and should be regulated by the EPA.
- Limit EPA's ability to regulate carbon pollution from major industrial sources or mobile sources and repeal the widely popular new fuel efficiency standards that both reduce pollution and save consumers money at the gas pump.
- Undermine the successful 40-year-old Clean Air Act by requiring that public health standards be based on industry costs. The bill would also block implementation of clean air rules that reduce mercury pollution, ozone smog, and undermine provisions of the Clean Air Act that require states to be "good neighbors."
- Block any new standards for surface coal mining, including mountaintop removal in Appalachia, and block efforts to set a minimum federal standard to ensure safe disposal of coal ash, despite the 2008 Tennessee Valley Authority coal ash spill in Kingston, TN.
- Weaken the core tenets of the 38-year-old Clean Water Act by undermining the existing model of state and federal cooperation and limiting EPA's authority to apply minimum national standards that protect the nation's waters from pollution.

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